



KENTUCKY
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

2026-2027 EDUCATOR RESOURCE GUIDE

*We educate and engage the public
through Kentucky's history in order
to meet the challenges of the future.*

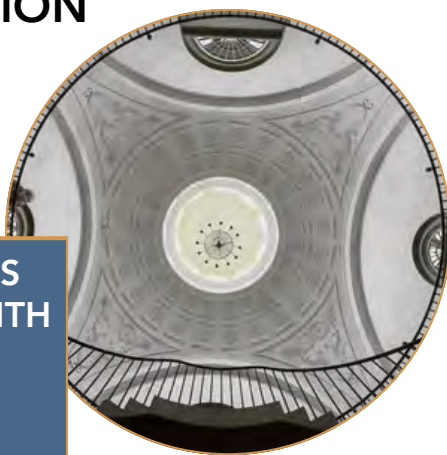


KENTUCKY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
100 W. BROADWAY ST.
FRANKFORT, KY 40601
HISTORY.KY.GOV



MAKING KENTUCKY HISTORY EDUCATION ACCESSIBLE AND RELEVANT

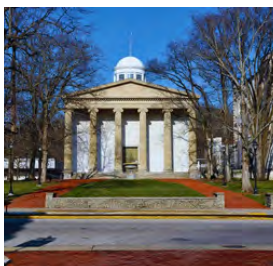
OPPORTUNITIES THAT ALIGN WITH KENTUCKY'S ACADEMIC STANDARDS



The Kentucky Historical Society (KHS) views history and social studies education as an inquiry-driven, interactive process rooted in historical evidence. We have a wealth of resources available for you and your students that we are eager to share! Allow us to assist you in fostering 21st-century learners while simultaneously supporting your development as educators.

WHAT IS THE KENTUCKY HISTORICAL SOCIETY?

The KHS campus has three sites in historic downtown Frankfort: the Old State Capitol; the Kentucky Military History Museum; and the Thomas D. Clark Center for Kentucky History, which serves as KHS headquarters and includes a signature museum, library and research center, object and archival collections, museum store, and more. KHS is an agency within Kentucky's Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet, a Smithsonian Affiliate, and holds full accreditation from the American Alliance of Museums.



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HISTORY & DEMOCRACY INITIATIVE

In our ongoing commitment to serving Kentucky's communities, KHS's History & Democracy Initiative recognizes the vital role history organizations play in strengthening civic culture. As a trusted institution with deep roots across the Commonwealth, KHS is well-positioned to demonstrate how historical knowledge fosters civic participation, bridges community divides, and elevates the many voices and experiences that shape Kentucky.

Looking ahead, KHS will intentionally integrate the principles of the History & Democracy Initiative throughout its programs, exhibitions, and educational offerings—inspiring civic practice through historical connections, guiding staff and partners with practical tools for civic engagement, and building cross-sector partnerships that support a healthy democracy. This work reflects KHS's broader mission to ensure Kentucky's history serves not only as a record of the past, but as a resource for building a more connected and engaged future for all Kentuckians.



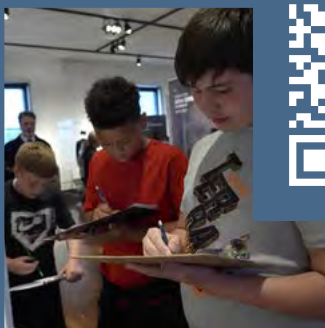




In honor of America250,
KHS is offering FREE field
trips in 2026!



**SCAN TO BOOK
YOUR FREE KHS
FIELD TRIP &
LEARNING LAB**



FIELD TRIPS & LEARNING LABS

Create a free* field trip experience your students won't forget. Three sites, many possibilities. Mix and match options, including the Kentucky History Center, Keeneland Gallery, Museum Store, Learning Labs, Old State Capitol, Kentucky Military History Museum, and Capitol Bus Tour.

KENTUCKY HISTORY CENTER

A Kentucky Journey

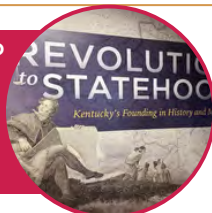
Our museum exhibition showcases 12,000 years of Kentucky history through interactive displays and walk-through environments. Students will explore primary sources from prehistory to the 20th century, gaining insight into the evolution of Kentucky. Includes a museum scavenger hunt activity and access to additional educator packets that support field trips. Self-guided experience.



Kentucky Hall of Governors

The Kentucky Hall of Governors contains official portraits of Kentucky's governors. Interactive touch screens prompt thought, and students will learn about each governor's administration and the evolution of the governor's office. This is a self-guided experience.

Keeneland Gallery Rotating Exhibit - NEW - Revolution to Statehood: Kentucky's Founding in History and Memory
Through immersive storytelling and thought-provoking artifacts, the exhibition offers a timely opportunity to reflect on Kentucky's origins and the people who shaped its path to statehood. Self-guided experience.



Stewart Home & School 1792 Museum Store

Discover treasures from the commonwealth during your visit and commemorate it with a unique item from the Stewart Home & School 1792 Museum Store. Your purchase supports educational programs at KHS.

SCAN TO SEE HOW A KHS FIELD TRIP & —> LEARNING LABS MEET KAS FOR SOCIAL STUDIES!



**Exciting news for Kentucky schools! In celebration of America250, the Kentucky Historical Society is offering free school field trips in 2026 thanks to the Elizabeth Lloyd "Libby" Jones Student Scholarship Fund.*

FIELD TRIPS & LEARNING LABS

OLD STATE CAPITOL

Delve into the 19th-century politics and everyday life at this National Historic Landmark that served as Kentucky's capitol from 1830 to 1910. This building was the setting for lively political debates as lawmakers grappled with issues of the day, such as slavery and war.



Government at Work

Students will explore the legislative branch and walk among artifacts from the days when the Old State Capitol buzzed with lawmakers, debates, and decisions that shaped our state. They'll discover how Kentucky's three branches of government work together, and step inside the historic law library where those laws once came to life.



Plaster Master

Recommended for Pre-K to fifth grade. This tour brings the Old State Capitol's architecture to life, along with the stories of the people who helped build it. Students will channel their inner plaster master, working with molds like the ones craftsman Harry Mordecai used to help create the building's intricate ceiling designs.

KENTUCKY MILITARY HISTORY MUSEUM

The main museum exhibit, *Kentucky Military Treasures*, tells the stories of Kentuckians and their part in nearly 200 years of conflict. The building itself is a piece of military history: the former State Arsenal dates to 1850 and once housed a cartridge factory that employed many women during the Civil War. Students can also visit a second exhibit, *George M. Chinn: Sights Set on Innovation*. Both are self-guided experiences.



FIELD TRIPS & LEARNING LABS

CAPITOL BUS TOUR: HOP ON GUIDE

A multi-year construction project addressing maintenance and upgrades will keep the Capitol building closed to the public until 2029. In the meantime, KHS is offering a guided driving tour for schools visiting Frankfort, with views of the Old State Capitol and historic legislators' houses along the way. Students will also walk around the Kentucky State Capitol and the Governor's Mansion to learn about the buildings' architecture and history. This mobile experience begins and ends at the Kentucky History Center. Schools must provide their own bus, and capacity is limited to one busload of students.



LEARNING LABS

Hands-on activities to enhance your students' experience. Limit one lab per year per grade level and limit one lab per visit.

Digging up Kentucky History

In this hands-on lab, students will dig into how communities change over time, using the same tools real archaeologists use to investigate artifacts. Pre-K to fourth grade only.

Quills and Bills

Students will examine the democratic process and the purpose of laws. Afterward, they can propose a bill to improve their community or write a letter to the mayor about good citizenship using a quill feather and ink.

Frontier Fortress

Students will explore Kentucky's early communities, frontier forts, and indigenous earthworks, focusing on their purposes, functions, and builders. They will analyze historical maps and illustrations and create community blueprints.

Vote for Me!

Students take on the role of political candidates, running for offices such as class president, mayor, or Kentucky governor. They build a campaign from the ground up, crafting a platform, designing an original poster and button, and delivering a persuasive speech to win their peers' votes, while learning active citizenship and effective leadership traits.

Innovative Inventors

Students study past Kentucky inventions, then take on the challenge of designing an improved gadget of their own, creating a patent sketch, building a model, and pitching their idea.

**SCAN TO BOOK
YOUR FREE KHS
FIELD TRIP &
LEARNING LAB**



VIRTUAL STUDENT EXPERIENCES

Bring Kentucky history to your classroom with a free Virtual Student Experience (VSE)! Throughout the school year, we offer virtual sessions on a variety of topics designed to spark curiosity and bring the past to life. Check our calendar to find a session that fits your students' interests.



SCAN TO SEE THE
VSE SCHEDULE →



National History Day in Kentucky (NHDKY) is an annual competition for students in grades 4-12. Students research a historical topic they're passionate about, connect it to today, and present their findings through creative formats, competing at the regional, state, and national levels. Competing gives students real-world experience advocating for their work and building confidence. Each year, KHS assembles judges from across the state to support this rewarding experience. NHDKY, administered by KHS, is an official affiliate of National History Day®, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.



BRING NHD TO YOUR
CLASSROOM! →



2027 THEME: INNOVATION IN HISTORY



The theme for National History Day® (NHD) 2027 is Innovation in History: Impact, Influence, Change. Innovation goes beyond creating new tools or devices to finding new ways of thinking, organizing, and influencing society. To put it simply, innovation, at its core, is about change and the impact of that change.

BRING KHS TO THE CLASSROOM



DIGITAL EDUCATOR RESOURCES

KHS offers a comprehensive range of digital resources to support educators in bringing Kentucky's rich history into the classroom. These resources include lesson plans, primary source documents, digital collections, and interactive tools tailored to different grade levels and learning objectives.

Visual Thinking Strategies

These PowerPoints with accompanying Teacher's Guides help students visualize the past. Analyzing an image to identify evidence that supports a student's observation is an essential skill for students.



Primary Source Packets

Packets of primary sources that meet Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies.



Digital Collections

Empowering educators through archives - access our digital collections to find primary source artifacts, documents, and images.



KAS Collection Connections

K-12 - these collection guides link each Kentucky-centric standard to transcribed and digitized primary sources from the KHS collection.



Lower, Middle & High School Resources

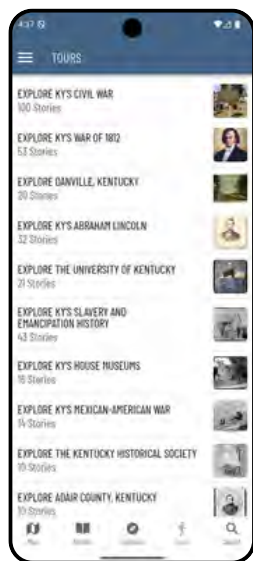
These align with KAS, specifically for each level and celebrate and enhance the understanding of Kentucky's rich history!



EXPLORE KY HISTORY MOBILE APP

Discover Kentucky history wherever you go. Explore KY History is a free app from KHS that puts the state's past right at your fingertips. Browse an interactive GPS-enabled map of historic sites, markers, and landscapes, and take self-guided tours through Kentucky's regions and communities.

Each stop brings history to life with archival images, expert-researched stories, and documentary videos or oral history clips.

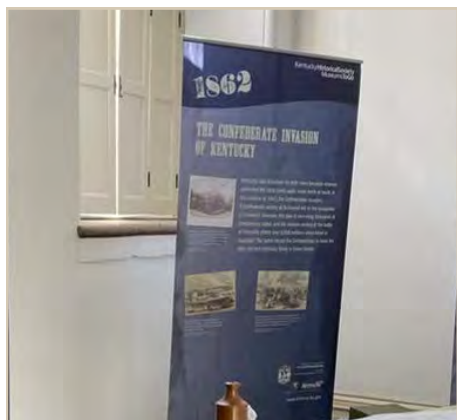


Download the App



MUSEUMS TO GO

Museums-to-Go traveling panel exhibits explore the humanities through historical images and lively text. These easily handled, small-scale exhibits are adaptable to a wide variety of locations.



Current Exhibits Available for Classrooms

Civil War in Kentucky

The Clays of Kentucky

Corsets, Croquet, and
Crusades: Kentucky
Women's Lives, 1889-1914

Discovering Kentucky's
Abraham Lincoln

Lewis & Clark: Kentuckians
and the Corps of Discovery

The Life & Legend of
Daniel Boone

The L&N Railroad

People of Kentucky

Praise the Lord and Pass the
Ammunition: Kentuckians
and World War II

100 Years of Kentucky
State Parks

**BRING MUSEUMS
TO GO TO YOUR
CLASSROOM!**



TRAVELING TRUNKS

Are you looking for a way to provide your students with a hands-on learning experience right from the comfort of your classroom? Our collection of traveling trunks is designed for just that! Packed with artifacts, primary and secondary sources, and much more, these trunks will help contextualize Kentucky history on a broader scale.

Trunks are available to schools, libraries, homeschool groups, and other organizations for educational purposes. Each trunk comes with a booklet outlining lesson plans and can be kept for three weeks.



Choose from the following:

Struggle and Statehood: 1776-1792

Pathways to Freedom: The Underground Railroad in Kentucky

The Civil War in Kentucky

Standing on a Soapbox: The Women's Suffrage Movement in Kentucky

Kentuckians in World War II: On the Home Front and in the War Zone

COMING SOON: Kentucky Unbound: Pack Horse Librarians; Kentucky Unbound: Fellow Kentuckians; Kentucky Unbound: Kentucky Authors; Oral History Kits



PROFESSIONAL LEARNING



TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

You strive to be an educator who inspires students. But who and what inspire you? KHS offers a variety of workshops (both virtual and in-person) and more for K-12 educators.

Our professional learning opportunities strive to make social studies education accessible and relevant by increasing content knowledge, sharpening skills, sparking creativity, and positively impacting students' – and all Kentuckians' – experiences with history.



Professional Learning Partnerships

KHS regularly collaborates with local and national organizations such as the Smithsonian Institution and Teaching American History to offer professional learning opportunities in social studies (including civics, economics, geography, and history), humanities, and language arts.

All workshops align with the latest Kentucky Academic Standards and provide educators with ample resources. Scan the QR code for the current schedule.

**VIEW
WORKSHOP
SCHEDULE
HERE /**



KHS Educator Workshops

Choose from one of the Kentucky Historical Society's educator professional learning opportunities. Bring an expert to your district to conduct the workshop or tune in virtually for a presentation.



- Engaging with Kentucky's Past: An Overview of KHS Resources & Programs
- Navigating National History Day in Kentucky
- Visual Thinking Strategies: Enhancing Visual Literacy and Historical Understanding

TEACHING KENTUCKY HISTORY INSTITUTE

Join us for an unforgettable journey through the Commonwealth's past! The Teaching Kentucky History Institute (TKHI) brings educators together with esteemed Kentucky-based scholars for an immersive exploration of our state's history, including hands-on visits to historically significant sites. Participants leave equipped with new knowledge, innovative teaching strategies, and resources to bring Kentucky history vividly to life for their students.



Program Highlights

Duration: Five days of immersive, content-rich learning.

Focus: In-depth exploration and discussion of Kentucky's history.

Affordable: Selected participants will be responsible for their transportation to and from Frankfort, and a few meals. KHS will cover all other expenses related to the TKHI program.

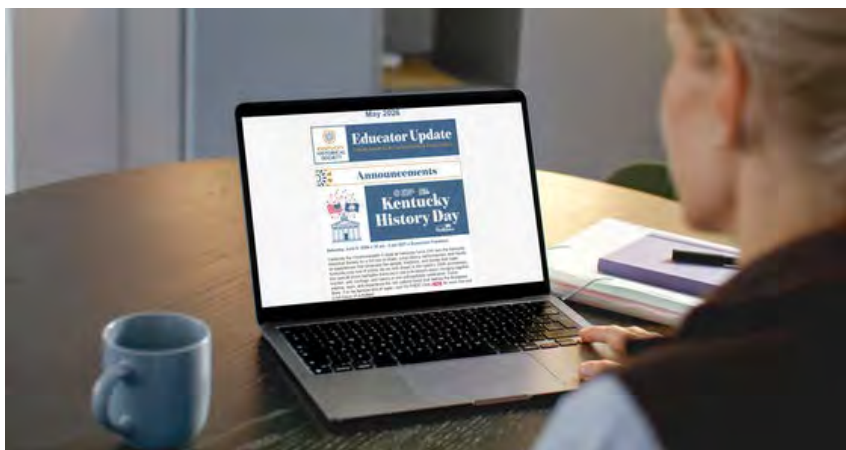
LEARN MORE
ABOUT THE
APPLICATION
PROCESS



"The TKHI was an unforgettable and invaluable experience for me as an educator. No other learning experience has better equipped me with the tools to teach Kentucky history like the TKHI has. The TKHI would not have been successful without the people from the KHS that put this on. Every single one of them were so kind and helpful with any question I came up with."

STAY INFORMED

Scan and sign up for our digital educator newsletter and receive monthly updates with resources specifically tailored for Kentucky and much more!





KENTUCKY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CONTACT US



100 W. BROADWAY ST. | FRANKFORT, KY
HISTORY.KY.GOV | 502-564-1792

VISIT OUR CAMPUS

Come visit us! Bring this pass with you on
your next visit for FREE admission.



KENTUCKY
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

ONE FREE ADMISSION

TO THE

**KENTUCKY HISTORY CENTER
& MUSEUMS**

One time use only. Special exhibits may be excluded.

*Expires **8/1/2027**.*